Taking risks in changing schools: citizenship, multiculturalism and children's human rights

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46664 was the prison number of Nelson Mandela on Robben Island, Cape Town where he was held in captivity for 18 years. The issue in South Africa then was apartheid. The issue today, across the continent, is Aids.
Zola High School, Khayelitsha: learning from learners
‘You must see this film. It is about our lives.’
Scenes from *Yesterday*
PROMOTING CHILDREN’S HUMAN RIGHTS
Promoting children’s human rights and ensuring quality education

The right to human rights education:

- Article 26 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and Article 28 of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child do not only state that such education should be free and compulsory, they also specify the right to human rights education.

Dakar EFA goals:

- all children, particularly girls, children in difficult circumstances and those belonging to ethnic minorities, have access to a completely free and compulsory education of good quality.
- the learning needs of all young people and adults are met through equitable access to appropriate learning and life skills programmes.
- Improving every aspect of the quality of education and ensuring excellence so that recognised and measurable learning outcomes are achieved by all, especially in literacy, numeracy and essential life skills.
What is human rights education?

training, dissemination and information efforts aimed at the building of a universal culture of human rights through the imparting of knowledge and skills and the moulding of attitudes directed to:

- the strengthening of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms
- the full development of the human personality and the sense of its dignity
- the promotion of understanding, tolerance, gender equality and friendship among all nations, indigenous peoples and racial, national, ethnic, religious and linguistic groups the enabling of all persons to participate effectively in a free society.

UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, 1997
Human rights education

- The right to education
- Rights in education
- Rights through education

(Verhellen, 2000)
Developing democratic citizens: building on student identities and experiences in communities
Developing democratic citizens

4 principles
Diversity and Unity
Global interconnectedness
Human Rights
Experience and participation

Citizenship, Unity and Diversity

Students should learn about the complex relationships between unity and diversity in their local communities, the nation, and the world. Banks et al. (2005) *Democracy and Diversity: principles and concepts for educating citizens in a global age.*
Global Interconnectedness

‘Students should learn about the ways in which people in their community, nation, and region are increasingly interdependent with other people around the world and are connected to the economic, political, cultural, environmental and technological changes taking place across the planet.’

Human Rights and Educators

‘The teaching of human rights should underpin citizenship education courses and programmes in multicultural nations-states’.

Experience and participation

Students should be taught knowledge about democracy and democratic institutions and provided opportunities to practice democracy.

Facing challenges and taking risks

It is easy to become cynical about our ability to change systems, about working for peace and justice, about human rights flouted in so many places throughout the world.

Archbishop Desmond Tutu
Teachers as agents of change
Teachers as agents of transformation

- What can I do as a global citizen?

- We cannot leave the matter of human rights education only to governments and others. What can I do as a teacher, acting on my responsibilities as a global citizen?
Examples of teaching for democracy and human rights

Teachers, Human Rights and Diversity: educating citizens in multicultural societies
Trentham, 2005

Changing Citizenship: democracy and inclusion in education
Open University Press 2005

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